

**MINUTES**  
**CITY COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING**  
**April 18, 2023**

The City of Cordele Commission held a Regular Meeting on April 18, 2023 at 9:00 AM, Cordele City Hall Courtroom, 501 North 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Cordele, Georgia with the following present:

Joshua Deriso, Commission Chair	Royce Reeves, Sr., Commission Vice Chair
Wesley Rainey, Commissioner	Vesta Beal Shephard, Commissioner
Tommy Coleman – City Attorney	Angela Redding – City Manager
Janice Mumphery – Recording Secretary	Isaac Owens, Commissioner – via telephone

**Staff present:** Rusty Bridgers – Finance Director, Fire Chief Alligood, Lt. Frank Bullington, Irene Cantrell – HUA Director, Jack Wood, Sr. – Chief Codes Official, David Wade – Human Resources Director, Jackie Walker – Municipal Court Clerk, Police Chief Jalon Heard, Steve Fulford – Asst. City Manager/Public Works Director, Debbie Wright – UC&T Director.

**Media Present:** Ricky Smarr - South GA TV; Sara Brown – Cordele Dispatch

**Call to Order:** Commission Chair Joshua Deriso called the Meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

**INVOCATION:** There was a moment of silent prayer.

**PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO THE UNITED STATES FLAG:** The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Rainey.

**ROLL CALL:** A quorum was established.

Attendee's Name	Title	Absent	Present
Joshua Deriso	Commission Chairman		✓
Royce Reeves, Sr.	Commission Vice Chairman		✓
Vesta Beal-Shephard	Commissioner Ward 1		✓
Isaac Owens	Commissioner Ward 3		✓
Wesley Rainey	Commissioner Ward 4		✓

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA** – April 18, 2023: Commissioner Shephard moved to approve the Agenda for April 18, 2023; seconded by Commissioner Owens; the motion was approved by the Commission.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – April 4, 2023: Commissioner Shephard moved to approve the Minutes for April 4, 2023; seconded by Commission Vice Chair Reeves; the motion was approved by the Commission.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**ARTICLE VI. USE PROVISIONS BY DISTRICT: SECTION 625.3 Conditional Uses**  
**PEARL SONJA LYONS AND GILBERT LYONS**  
**406 West 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Cordele, Georgia**

Pearl Sonja Lyons and Gilbert Lyons are requesting a variance to locate a single wide Manufactured Home at 406 West 4th Avenue. The zoning classification of this property is R-4, Multi-Family Residential District.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

**Commission Vice Chair Reeves:** "Will the front door face the street?"

**Irene Cantrell** – HUA Director: "No Sir."

**Commission Vice Chair Reeves:** "When we discussed the Mobile Homes being placed, isn't this one of the things we discussed, front door facing the street, isn't this something we added?"

**Irene Cantrell:** "Not necessarily, none of the single wide face the street, unless you have two lots."

**Commission Vice Chair Reeves:** "Has anyone visited this area? Can you stand there in that area and see another Mobile Home?"

**Carol Johnson (citizen):** "It's a double wide right next to where it is going to probably be placed." I am related to the ones that are asking for this."

**City Manager Angela Redding:** "Is it across the alley or right next to it?"

**Carol Johnson:** "It is right next to it."

**City Manager Angela Redding:** "I rode by there; I know the area is small." "That's why I asked Codes if it met the distance requirements to the next house, because it is a small area."

**Commission Vice Chair Reeves:** "Do we have any opposing neighbors?"

**City Manager Angela Redding:** "No one showed up, the sign was very small, you had to park your car and get out to read the sign."

**Commissioner Shephard:** "What size is the lot?" "Does anyone know?"

**Carol Johnson:** "150 x 150"

**City Manager Angela Redding:** Asked Jack Wood, "What is the size of the lot?"

**Jack Wood:** "150 x 150, I think, I am not sure." "I haven't seen the paperwork on it, Mrs. Irene should have it."

**Commission Chair Deriso:** "Anyone else has comments on putting a single wide there on that lot?" "So far, we have on person to say, there are other Mobile Homes there?"

**Carol Johnson:** "It is a Double Wide Mobile Home in that area." "There is a double wide that is facing 11<sup>th</sup> Street. So, as far as I know it would have to go right behind that double wide, because there is another home house that belongs to my uncle right next to it."

**Commissioner Shephard:** "Then there was a single wide right across the street, years ago, on that corner. There has been Mobile Homes in that area prior and they were not facing the Street either."

**Commission Shephard:** "Do we post signs that a Mobile Home is requesting to be there, has anyone commented in the neighborhood?"

**Jack Wood:** “Through the years, we have cut down on the size of the signs, but we need to go back putting them higher and larger. We use to place them on a metal green post, through the years they have been reduced down to just sticking one in the ground and that really doesn’t get people attention. Once we put them on the higher and larger signs, maybe the neighborhood will notice them more and we are in the process of redoing that.” “But the answer to your question, there was a sign there.”

**CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING:** Commission Vice Chair Reeves moved to close the Public Hearing at 9:10 AM; seconded by Commissioner Shephard; the Public Hearing was closed.

### **REGULAR MEETING CONVENED AT 9:10 AM**

**SPEAKERS APPEARANCES:** Speakers will have five (5) minutes: No Request.

**SPEAKERS ON A SPECIFIC AGENDA ITEM:** Speaker will have three (3) minutes: No Requests.

**DOWNTOWN DIRECTOR:** Monica Rentfrow – Quarterly Report

**Project Completed:**

- Perlis Park Mural – Completed; paid for by a Vibrant Community Grant through GA Council for the Arts.  
A gentleman pressured washed the wall for the Mural. Rules have been posted for the Park. We want to have a rededication in June. Mrs. Rentfrow stated she has talked with the Perlis Family and they do want to participate.
- Two businesses close: Kathy & Company and Cotton Alley
- One Revitalization Rehab underway next to Arthur Jackson’s business.
- One building sold on 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue and it is currently being cleaned out to lease.
- The Alamo House: The Civil Engineer came to town last week and the City met him there; they are working on drainage and sewerage.
- The demolition at the old WSST Building is ongoing.
- Autism Stroll: Saturday, April 22, 2023, 10:00 AM – 12:00 Noon, at the Perry Busbee Walking Track behind the hospital.

Commission Chair Deriso asked, how many businesses are downtown. Mrs. Rentfrow answered, last count, it was fifty-two (52).

Commission Chair Deriso asked, what is the area for downtown, what street to what street?

Mrs. Rentfrow stated the district runs from 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue at EnMark to the 5<sup>th</sup> Street overpass, down to 16<sup>th</sup>, we pick up CVS and JW Design and then it goes back to 7<sup>th</sup> Street, back down to 8<sup>th</sup> Street to 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

Commission Chair Deriso asked, how many buildings are vacant near the Hotdog Stand? Mrs. Rentfrow stated, she thinks it is five (5).

Commission Chair Deriso asked, if any of the buildings are up for lease. Mrs. Rentfrow stated, the one on 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Rail House Tavern, a store front where Rail House expanded, and then there is another store front, the old Food Bank Building will be up for sale. There is a lady that is trying to buy the Rags to Riches Building. Alyssa Wilkerson has the Old Cordele Bank Building.

Commission Chair Deriso asked what are the priorities to make the Downtown area to look more attractive to buyers and investors?

Mrs. Rentfrow stated it would be resurfacing the sidewalks, update or paint the light poles and then making the facades more attractive.

**PRESENTATION:** CGI Digital Community Showcase Video Program via ZOOM.

The presentation is on their Community Digital Video Program in Conjunction with the National League of Cities and the US Mayors Association; they provide five (5) videos to communities to help showcase their community. The videos will be produced locally, but they will also send links, so that the videos can be placed on the website and any type of social media to help promote the community. It is free of charge to the City. CGI Digital reached out to the City of Cordele to see if we had an interest in participating this year.

### **Agenda Item #1**

#### **Board Member Swearing-In: Alyssa Wilkerson**

Board – Downtown Development Authority of Cordele – Four Year term

Ms. Wilkerson was sworn in by Commission Chair Deriso.

### **DEPARTMENT HEADS GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

#### **1. FINANCE DEPARTMENT: Rusty Bridgers Reported.**

##### **Goals and Achievements**

**Cross Training** - utility billing, sanitation, court payments, customer service are areas in process Complete FY2022 audit - fieldwork is complete, review and reporting in process Rotating shifts have been implemented to improve customer service.

##### **Improve Records - storage, electronic, organization**

Replace manual documents with spreadsheets - in process

Improve purchasing process with better accountability - in process

Scanners have been added to workstations

##### **Departmental Reporting**

Monthly expenses with budget v/s actual - to be implemented FY2024

Identify key metrics for managers

#### **2. FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT: Fire Chief Todd Allgood and Lt. Frank Bullington Reported.**

Chief Allgood stated, the Fire Department will have a Command Staff Meeting tomorrow, which is all the officers of the Department. There is a vacant Sergeant position, this is one thing we will discuss and I would like to get that filled. When we get ready to make that promotion, I will like for all of you all to attend. I would appreciate it if you are available. Also, when this is done, the Fire Department will have three Firefighters positions open, one

for each shift. Chief Alligood stated he has already talked with Human Resources and Information Technology (IT) about posting those positions. I also plan on going to the high school to speak with the Counselors and explain the opportunities the Cordele Fire Department offers to the graduating seniors.

**Lt. Bullington Reported Goals and Accomplishments:**

**Goals:**

- The Fire Department welcome our new Fire Chief into this position and to go forward with future growth.
- The Fire Department has an Officers Meeting scheduled for Wednesday, April 19<sup>th</sup>, for open discussion on Fire Department issues and concerns.
- The department is still in the equipment testing portion of the yearly hose test, which is scheduled for May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>. With other equipment tests scheduled to be completed by mid-June.

**Accomplishments:**

- Fireworks Tax Grant has been completed and turned in by Lt. Cook.
- We have almost completed the first cleaning for weeds and high grass, also spraying of weed killer in-order to keep the hydrants manicured.
- The Ladder truck has been out of service with several mechanical issues, it is back in service, thanks our City maintenance shop.
- Met with the State Fire Marshal at the Gillespie Project. It is moving along with a few issues to get worked out, but a project that size and working with a Historical Building, there will be issues.
- Lt. Bullington would like to express my appreciation for Mrs. Angela Redding allowing me the opportunity to have served an Interim Fire Chief.

**3. HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT – Irene Cantrell Reported.**

Mrs. Cantrell stated that HUA is working on the project at the McLeod Subdivision; we are 65% complete. There are other residents in the McLeod Subdivision that would like to have the sewer pump installed.

**Goal:**

To discuss ways to be better serve loan recipients that may need some assistance in properly managing their income, bets and assets prior to obtaining and EDRLF Loan.

**Accomplishment:**

The EDRLF Committee discussed a particular solution to offer loan recipients prior to applying for a loan, such as, contacting the University of Georgia’s Small Business Center, regarding their “Business Consulting Services” at no cost to Georgia Business Owners and Entrepreneurs.

City Manager Angela Redding responded to Mrs. Cantrell report: City Manager Angela Redding stated, in regards to the McLeod Subdivision Sewer Project, a list of homes was brought before the Commission and requested approval to move forward with this project based on the number of home owners who signed on to participate in the project. With projects, once an individual start seeing what is going on and then they want to come back and join the project. The City received a certain amount of funding and the project was

already over budget; the Commission agreed that we could utilize other funds to cover the amount that was over budget. So, now we have other homeowners who want to participate in this program, but it will come with an increase cost to the City. So, what I have been doing, as those homeowners have been requesting to be connected, the Contractor will send notification to Mrs. Cantrell about the request to be connected to the project; I always ask Mrs. Cantrell if they signed the forms to participate; most of the ones that I have asked about, they signed the form stating that they did not want to participate. There was one that had signed paperwork, but he was not on the list, so I did ask them to move forward with that one because he signed the paperwork and met the deadline. But, as far as the others who signed paperwork, saying “no”, again it will be an increase cost to the City and each additional connection is an extensive amount of money. I just wanted to make sure, you all were aware of this. Based on their paperwork and the extra expense to the City, right now, I have been letting Mrs. Cantrell know that, at this point and time, the City does not have the additional funds to bring them on line. City Manager Angela Redding stated she will get the cost and let the Commissioners know the cost to install the Sewers.

**4. CODES REPORT: Jack Wood, Sr. Reported.**

2023 (to date) DEMOLITIONS BY OWNER: Increased by two (2) from last year.

Houses Pending Demolition by Owners: Increased by four (4)

Mr. Wood stated that the Codes Department is working on this and attempting to speed the process up as much as we can.

The Codes Department has to do a better job in putting larger signs up. Mr. Wood stated that the Codes Department needs to get the Commission and BZA more information on the Neighborhoods.

**5. PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT: David Wade Reported.**

**Recruitment**

Attended the Career Technical Agricultural Education (CTAE) advisory board meeting and community needs assessment on March 28, 2023.

Attended the South Georgia Technical College Advisory Committee Meeting on April 12, 2023.

**Succession Planning**

Hired a Fire Chief effective April 17, 2023.

**6. POLICE DEPARTMENT – Police Chief Jalon Heard Reported.**

**Goals**

Our department will continue to increase the morale and manpower within the department. This is an ongoing goal.

We will continue community policing thru events and public contacts.

We are focusing on increasing the quality of training for our officers, and now are offering more in-house training class which are specific to the city’s and department’s needs.

Our department will be starting the process of becoming State Certified.

**Accomplishments**

We will be participating in an Autism awareness stroll. April 21, from 10-12 at the Crisp Regional walking track.

Promotion of Cpl. Amy Stokes to Detective Sergeant. This will be effective on Monday, April 17<sup>th</sup>. Promotion and award ceremony date TBD.  
Recognize Sgt. Middleton and Ofc. Wells for their actions on scene of the shooting at 1107 S 7<sup>th</sup>. They applied a tourniquet and other life saving measures which saved the life of the victim.  
Police Chief Heard recognized FDC Dallas Mathis. She was off duty and spotted the suspect vehicle. She followed the vehicle from a safe distance while on the phone with 911. The suspect was apprehended as a result of her actions.

**7. PUBLIC WORKS – Steve Fulford Reported.**

Improve the working order and functionality of the 7 holding ponds.  
Work has been completed on the holding pond at 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 10<sup>th</sup> Street.

**Completed:** Redefine critical system valves.

**Completed:** Compile and submit PHMSA 7100 Report

**Completed:** Compile and submit EIA-176 Report

Valve Maintenance - **70% Complete**

**Prepare and submit Cordele’s next five-year SWMP.**

Turned over to Steve on April 03, 2023, for review.

**8. UT&C – Debbie Wright Reported.**

- Water restrictions are still in place since 2011. You cannot irrigate/water your property with City water from 10 am till 4 pm. This applies to residential and commercial property. If you have an automatic irrigation system, make sure your timer is set properly.
- Our eighth samples at the WWTP for Heptaclor and Cyanide came back as Not Detected.
- We are looking into fixing some of our existing aerators in the old pond. We have several that needs the wire to be replaced and a couple my need rewinding or replacing. We have 1 back in service this week.
- Drinking Water Week is May 7-13, 2023.
- I completed the Water Quality Report for 2022. It is available on our website [www.cityofcordele.com/water](http://www.cityofcordele.com/water).
- EPA has mandated that all water systems must have a completed Lead Service Line Inventory by Oct. 2024. We have started working on this but it is a huge undertaking. If any lead service lines are found they must be replaced. We are going to apply for some Grant money to assist us in this endeavor.

**AGENDA ITEMS**

1. Consider and Approve the Agreement with CGI Digital Community Showcase Video Program. City Manager Angela Redding recommended to proceed.  
Commissioner Shephard moved to proceed with CGI Digital Community Showcase Video Program; seconded by Commission Vice Chair Reeves; the motion was approved by the Commission.

2. Consider and Approve an Alcohol License. Business – Kennys Food Mart; 902 W 16th Avenue. Owner is Ketan Jashvantlal Patel. Beer Only – Consumed Off Premises. The application was approved By Chief Heard on April 13, 2023. Commissioner Shephard moved to approve the Alcohol License; seconded by Commission Vice Chair Reeves; the motion was approved by the Commission,
3. Consider and Approve Alcohol Renewals. No exception noted.

16 East	1309 E 16th Ave	Beer & Wine Consumed On Premises Liquor By The Drink
Love’s Travel Stop	1523 E 8th Ave	Beer & Wine Consumed Off Premises
Tri-County Seafood	401 S Pecan St.	Beer & Wine Consumed On Premises

Commission Vice Chair Reeves moved to approve the Alcohol Renewals; seconded by Commissioner Shephard; the motion was approved by the Commission.
4. Consider and Approve the Second Reading of An Ordinance Amending the City Code of the City of Cordele to Prohibit Kennels in Residential and Certain Areas of the City; Repealing all Ordinances in Conflict Herewith; and For Other Purposes. Commission Vice Chair Reeves moved to approve the Second Reading of the Ordinance; seconded by Commissioner Shephard; the motion was approved by the Commission.
5. Consider Proposal from TTL, Inc. for Watershed Monitoring, Bioassessment and Annual Report

**Background and Summary**

The scope of work includes sample collection, sample analyses and reporting for five (5) sampling locations. This project is required by EPD under the NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) Wastewater Permit.

Commission Vice Chair Reeves moved to approve this proposal from TTL; seconded by Commissioner Shephard; the motion was approved by the Commission.

6. Consider and Approve SPLOST Distribution Formulas  
Commissioner Rainey moved to approve the SPLOST Distribution Formulas; seconded by Commission Vice Chair Reeves; the motion was approved by the Commission.
7. Approve a request of variance to locate a single wide Manufactured Home at 406 West 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The zoning classification of this property is R-4, Multi-Family Residential District. Commission Vice Chair Reeves moved to approve a variance to locate a single wide Manufactured Home at 406 West 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue; seconded by Commissioner Shephard; the motion was approved by the Commission.
8. **CITY MANAGER’S REPORT:**  
Food Truck Violation Penalty  
The Food Truck Ordinance has been approved but did not include penalties for violation of the Ordinance.  
Commission Vice Chair Reeves moved to table penalties for Food Trucks violating the Ordinance, to have the City Manager or City Attorney to reach out to the City Judge, so the

Commission can have some clarity on this matter; seconded by Commissioner Shephard; the motion was approved by the Commission.

**Update from District 8 Listening Session in Americus Georgia:**

City Manager Angela Redding and Commissioner Vesta Beal Shephard attended the District 8 Listening Session in Americus, Georgia and they received an update on Legislation that passed during the Meeting of the General Assembly. One in particular that was debated across the State was a Bill to increase truck weight limits on the highway. House Bill #189 allows for an increase in truck weight limits to 88,000 pounds and it is only for a limited number of industries, it is 150-mile radius from their delivery point or origin. However, it was included in the Bill that the local law enforcement will be responsible for enforcing the weight limits on trucks. Also, the Bill passed without them realizing that the enforcement by the local law enforcement agency only applies to Counties. This was one of the most important Bills that was being debated this year.

**Georgia Cities Week Activities**

- Georgia Cities Week is April 23-29, 2023. The following activities have been planned:  
Friday, April 21, 2023 - Employee Appreciation Luncheon, 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM  
(*Employee Take Out or Dine In*)
- Friday, April 21, 2023 - Family Movie Night at the Community Clubhouse, 7:30 PM  
(*City of Cordele and Crisp County Community Council*)
- Monday, April 23, 2023 – Employee Service Awards Luncheon, Community Clubhouse, 11:30 AM (*Employees receive service awards for 5 Year increments longevity milestones reached last year*)
- Thursday, April 27, 2023 – Housing Resource Assistance Summit for Families, 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM (*Southwest Georgia United*)

**Board Appointments**

- Board of Zoning Appeals
- Juvenile Crime & Community Safety Committee

9. **CITY ATTORNEY’S REPORT:** City Attorney Tommy Coleman stated that they have found the reorganized owner of the Peanut Mill on 11<sup>th</sup> Street and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue and gave them notice specifically about the tin and hopefully this can be resolved quickly.
10. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** (For Personnel, Litigation, Real Estate): No Executive Session.
11. **COMMENTS BY THE GOVERNING BODY:** Commissioner Shephard stated that she was honored to serve as the City Representative at Fort Valley Headstart, The Week of the Young Child.  
Our City Manager Angela Redding was recognized in the Cordele Dispatch, March 29, 2023.
12. **ADJOURNMENT:** Commission Vice Chair Reeves moved to adjourn the Meeting at 10:46 AM; seconded by Commissioner Rainey; the motion was approved by the Commission.